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Prez signs foreign aid bill

By BARBARA REHM

Washington (News Bureau)—President Reagan yesterday signed a \$25.4 billion foreign aid bill, saying he was “particularly pleased” it resumes the direct U.S. role in the guerrilla war to topple the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

The bill contains \$27 million in “nonlethal” aid to the contras.

But the President also criticized the bill for containing “substantial reductions” in military aid for U.S. allies.

“I’m particularly pleased that Congress has provided renewed aid to the Nicaraguan freedom fighters, replaced the so-called Clark Amendment (which prohibited U.S. intelligence support for rebels fighting the Marxist government of Angola) and provided support for the

Philippines and Guatemala,”
Reagan said.

“The substantial reduction in support levels for security assistance has been disappointing,” Reagan said, indicating he may appeal to Congress for more money in the months ahead, particularly for El Salvador, Honduras, Thailand and Morocco.

Meanwhile, the White House acknowledged that

senior U.S. officials had “contacts” with the contras.

But Reagan told reporters at the signing ceremony: “We are not violating any laws.”

White House spokesman Larry Speakes said “contacts (between senior administration officials and the contra rebels) have been made from time to time for the purpose of receiving information and for fostering contacts.”